BENGALURU, MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

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PAGE 4

WALK AT YOUR OWN RISK

Faulty lifts, unclean corners, inadequate infra force pedestrians to ditch skywalks, take their risks on traffic-heavy roads

PAGE 5

DEBIT DEBACLE

Bank's failure to send SMS alerts on debit transactions puts family in deep trouble as Rs 14 lakh whisked away

Of 6,567 stolen phones in February, just 997 returned to their owners. CEIR portal has helped police trace more lost phones, but lack of awareness proving hurdle

FIND MY PHONE...

Once out of state or country, stolen phones hit the black market

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On March 2, police officers probing phone thefts detained two suspects near GKW Layout Circle. When the men were checked, police discovered 18 mobile phones in their possession. The duo confessed to having committed phone snatchings in several parts of the city. While these 18 phones are just a drop in the ocean, of these even fewer will reach their rightful owners. According to the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) portal, a staggering 6,567 mobile phones have been reported stolen in the city in February this year.

Though losing a mobile phone is not just about parting with a device but also means losing crucial personal data, memories, and sometimes financial security, there is no guarantee that you may ever get it back. Of the phones stolen in February, police have been able to trace only 2,179, and the actual recovery rate remains dismal, with just 997 phones returned to their rightful owners.

The men were arrested based on a complaint filed on February 26 at Rajagopal Nagar Police Station. The complainant, a factory worker residing in Andrahalli, Kempegowdanagar, reported that while he was on his way to work, two unidentified individuals on a black bike snatched his mobile phone, valued at Rs 24,000 and fled.

Acting on intelligence inputs, the police launched a thorough investigation. The accused have been linked to multiple cases across the city, including one mobile extortion case each in Rajagopal Nagar and Peenya Police Stations, as well as two-wheeler theft cases registered at Bagalagunte and Vijayanagar Police Stations. Efforts are underway to trace the owners of the remaining 16 mobile phones.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> "Many victims take time to report the theft, which allows culprits to either switch off the phone or change the SIM card, making tracking much harder
>
> — Police official

Not a minor issue at all

Stricter enforcement of Juvenile Justice Act, social media tips leading to bigger crackdown on wheelie menace

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Bengaluru has witnessed a sharp rise in cases involving minor offenders, due to stricter enforcement of the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act. The city police, particularly the traffic division, have ramped up surveillance in areas known for wheeling incidents, such as Outer Ring Roads and long stretches of plain roads, where offenders exploit open spaces to perform dangerous stunts.

In a crackdown between December 2 and 12, traffic police registered 76 cases, seized 75 vehicles, and confiscated 45 registration certificates. Among those caught, 15 were minors, leading to legal action against 10 guardians under the JJ Act.

Apart from traffic violations, there has been a notable increase in cases booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, with minors being increasingly involved. Heightened enforcement and monitoring have contributed to this surge.

"We closely watch such areas, and when offenders post their stunts on social media, we track their past activities, locations, and associates. Based on this, strict action is taken," said DCP Traffic (West), Anitha B Haddannavar.

If the offender is a minor, their parents face legal consequences under the JJ Act, and their driving licence issuance

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 High fashion

CULUX is organising a fashion pop-up, presenting exclusive collections from independent designers and brands, along with curated selections, styling tips, and luxury fashion consultations. **Where: Raintree, Sankey Road; When: March 17 to 19**

02 Creative craftsmanship

Hi Life Exhibition is presenting an exclusive collection of designer fashion, statement jewellery, luxury home décor, and much more. From elegant ensembles to trendsetting accessories, the exhibition aims to offer a world of creativity and craftsmanship, all under one roof. **Where: The Lalit Ashok, Seshadripuram; When: March 15 to March 17**

03 Reel deal

The Indian Music Experience Museum (IME) is presenting 'Aasmana Anasuya', a film on Telugu folk, as part of the second edition of Women's History Month, a month-long festival throughout March 2025, dedicated to celebrating and amplifying the invaluable contributions of women to the diverse landscape of Indian music. **Where: Indian Music Experience Museum, JP Nagar; When: March 22, 1.30 pm**

04 Instant wit

Small World is organising an improv workshop, offering a chance to hone your quick thinking skills, and unleash your creativity within two-minute impromptu challenges, turning unexpected topics into captivating performances. **Where: Small World, Koramangala; When: March 29, 4 pm**

05 Drape delight

The National Design Centre, New Delhi, in collaboration with the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, is set to host the Bengaluru Saree Festival that will bring together 75 skilled handloom weavers, Self-Help Groups, and cooperative societies from across India to showcase the rich diversity of Indian handloom sarees. **Where: Shubh Convention Centre, JP Nagar; When: March 14 to 20**

No amphitheatre at lake, only Kalyani: BBMP informs HC

In response to petition, HC has stated that BBMP must not allow lake land to be used for commercial purposes, ensure adherence of Karnataka Tank Conservation and Development Authority (KTCDA)

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The amphitheatre in Mallathahalli Lake area, which will be used as a Kalyani and not as an amphitheatre, as per BBMP Chief Commissioner's statement

The Karnataka High Court has disposed of a civil contempt petition pertaining to Mallathahalli Lake in Raja Rajeshwari Nagar Assembly constituency.

The civil contempt petition was filed by Geetha Misra, against Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath for not complying with a High Court order passed on March 14, 2023. The High Court directed BBMP to not permit any individual, group, or any political party to use the Mallathahalli Lake area. However, it is said that some politicians continue to encourage some organizations to conduct religious and commercial activities in the lake area.

"We hope and trust that the respondent- BBMP, including the government, will not create unnecessary litigation before this Court and ensure compliance of provisions of Karnataka Tank Conservation and Development Authority (KTCDA) Act, strictly and in accordance with law," the High Court order passed on March 14, 2023 read.

In an additional compliance affidavit, BBMP Chief Commissioner informed the High Court that iron grills, meshes, and pillars mentioned in paragraph 7 of the affidavit dated 12.07.2024, have been removed, and sleepers mentioned therein will be removed within a period of 15 days.

BBMP Chief Commissioner also stated that the Mallathahalli Lake area will be used as a Kalyani and not as an amphitheater.

"We have been fighting for quite a long time to stop illegal constructions on the lake land. We want the authorities to restore Mallathahalli," said GR Mohan, a High Court advocate.

In conversation with BM, Geetha Misra, who filed the civil contempt petition, said that some people have been trying to put up structures on the lake land for commercial purposes. "We want the authorities to follow the High Court order, and restore the water body," she said.

Shivakumar Hosamani, a social activist, demanded that BBMP authorities should not allow politicians or any organizations to use the lake land for commercial purposes. He stated that he and a few environmentalists were labelled as anti-Hindu for opposing religious activities on the lake land. "Some people made attempts to construct a temple on the lake land," he said.

> **"We have been fighting for quite a long time to stop illegal constructions on the lake land. We want the authorities to restore Mallathahalli lake**
> – GR Mohan, High Court advocate

An environmentalist questioned the logic behind BBMP Chief Commissioner's affidavit (para 10, dated March 12, 2024) stating that the Kalyani in Mallathahalli Lake area was built in a way that it would be used as an amphitheatre as well. He opined that Mallathahalli Lake does not require a Kalyani that occupies more lake land. "Now, BBMP authorities have to take up conversion of the amphitheatre into a Kalyani. Who will bear the cost? Who gave permission to construct an amphitheater on the lake land by spending tax-payers' money? Why no punishment for those who allowed the construction of kalyani that can be used as an amphitheater?" the environmentalist questioned.

Anna Bhagya scheme: Cash to be replaced with rice

As part of the Anna Bhagya scheme, the government has begun distributing 15 kg of rice per beneficiary, including the pending 5 kg from February. According to the Department of Food and Civil Supplies, the distribution started a few days ago. Earlier, beneficiaries received cash in place of the additional 5 kg rice, but from February onwards, the state government decided to provide rice instead of cash payments. However, due to delays in implementation, the additional 5 kg was not distributed last month, and is now being included in March's quota. The government has warned ration cardholders against selling subsidized rice in the black market. Anyone caught engaging in such activities will face cancellation of their ration card. Additionally, unauthorised hoarding and transportation of food grains will lead to legal action under the Essential Commodities Act. **— BMB**

RGUHS under fire for repeated question paper

Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) is facing allegations of reusing a one-year-old question paper in a recent Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) examination. According to reports, the question paper used in the pre-preparatory examination conducted in 2023 for Ayurveda colleges was allegedly the same as the one given for the BAMS exam held on March 7, at the Ayurveda hospital in Hubballi. The All India People's Council (AIPC) has raised concerns over the issue. Calling it a major lapse, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) co-ordinator Dr NM Likhith Gowda demanded an inquiry. "If a pre-preparatory question paper is reused for the final exam, it raises serious concerns about the credibility of the examination system. This is a clear case of mismanagement, and an investigation must be conducted," he asserted.

Vice Chancellor responds

Defending the university, RGUHS Vice Chancellor Dr Bhagawan clarified that the mistake originated not from the university, but from the respective college. He noted that the question papers are prepared and stored in a computer database. "During the exam, the system randomly selects the question paper. It has now come to our attention that there is a similarity between the selected paper and a previously used one," he explained. He stated that a meeting with university officials has been planned for Monday to address the matter. "If it is found that the college is at fault, strict disciplinary action will be taken," he assured. **— BMB**

Adulterated lentil sparks health alert

Food safety officials have raised an alarm about the adulteration of toor dal with chemically dyed grass pea or khesari dal (*Lathyrus sativus*), prolonged consumption of which can cause severe nerve disorders, paralysis (lathyrism), and even cancer. Khesari dal sold at cheaper rates, is being illegally mixed with toor dal. To conceal this adulteration, food fraudsters add synthetic yellow dye to khesari dal. Food safety officials are conducting extensive testing on dal samples sold in the market to detect this dangerous adulteration.

Honey under scrutiny

Officials have also issued a warning about the adulteration of honey, stating that chemical dyes are being used to enhance its appearance. Several honey samples are currently undergoing lab tests to determine their purity. **— BMB**

BM Finance Fundas

DA hike likely for central government employees

From April 1, 2025, interest income from FDs will only be subject to TDS deduction if the amount, at the aggregate level in a bank, exceeds Rs 1 lakh in a financial year for the senior citizens. This means if a senior citizen keeps his/her interest income below Rs 1 lakh at a bank, then that bank will not deduct any TDS.

This means investors can effectively manage this TDS by calculating the right investment amount for a given interest rate, ensuring it remains within the annual interest threshold of TDS.

If you carefully calculate how much money to invest in bank FDs so that the interest earned remains at or below Rs 1 lakh then you can prevent TDS from being deducted..

If it crosses Rs 1 lakh, then TDS will be deducted, unless Form 15H is submitted. Form 15H prevents TDS from being deducted, provided the annual income of the senior citizen submitting it does not exceed the basic exemption limit.

However, do note TDS is not any extra tax. You can get it back with additional interest once you file the income tax return (ITR), if your net tax liability is less than the amount of TDS deducted.

The last DA hike, announced in October 2024, was effective retrospectively from July 2024. Herein, the DA was hiked from 50% to its present level of 53%.

By how much will DA increase in March 2025?

The Dearness Allowance (DA) plays a crucial role in determining the take-home salary of government employees and pensioners.

As a cost-of-living adjustment, DA is calculated as a percentage of basic pay and makes sure that pensioners and salaried employees can mitigate the impact of inflation.

Explains Shryeshth R Sharma, Partner, SKV Law Offices, "The Central Government reviews the dearness allowance (DA) twice a year, once in January and again in July.

The dearness allowance rate is determined based on the All-India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (AICPI-IW), published by the Labor Bureau. The government decides on the DA hike after analysing the AICPI-IW data from the previous six months.

— ET Online

1 hurt after getting caught in Lalbagh drunken brawl

A Holi celebration at Lalbagh Botanical Garden turned chaotic on Saturday evening when a clash broke out between two groups, including intoxicated youths of Nepalese origin, over a minor dispute.

The altercation quickly escalated into a violent brawl, with both sides attacking each other with sticks, throwing punches and kicks, and shouting abuses, causing panic among other visitors.

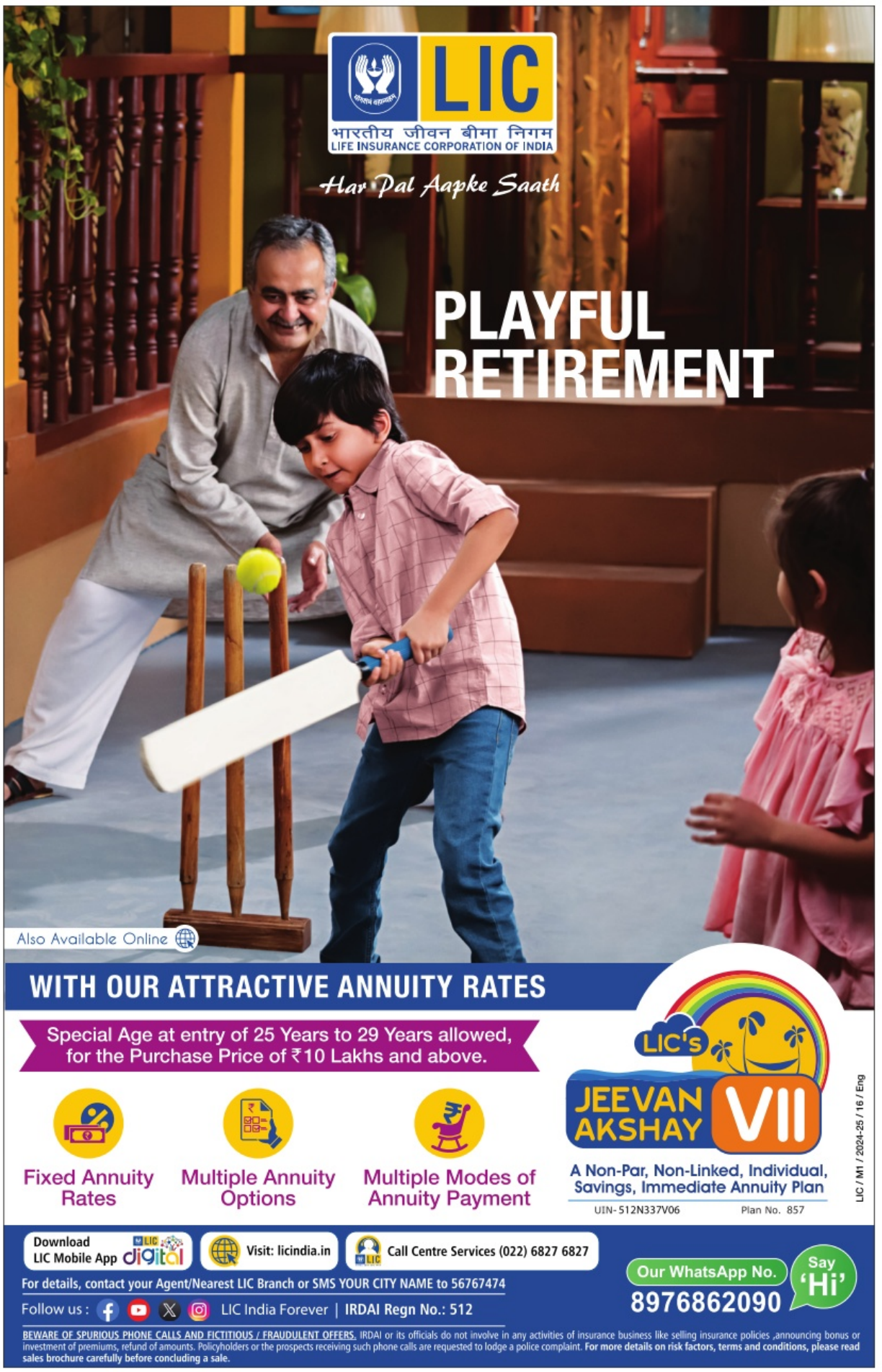
Amar, an umbrella seller who attempted to intervene and pacify the situation, was brutally assaulted. Concerned visitors alerted the security personnel, who, despite their efforts, struggled to control the fight and subsequently informed the control room.

Siddapura police arrived at the scene, dispersed the crowd, and shifted the injured Amar to a private hospital, where he is currently recovering. Acting on the incident, the police registered a suo-motu case, arresting three individuals involved in the clash while efforts are underway to trace the others who fled the scene.

The incident has raised serious concerns over security lapses by the Lalbagh administration. Due to lack of security checks, visitors were able to carry liquor and colours inside the park, despite prohibitions. Additionally, inadequate patrolling allowed the situation to spiral out of control, particularly during the festive rush.

DCP South Division, Lokesh Jagalasar, stated that the disturbance stemmed from a dispute between two families and was swiftly brought under control.

He also assured that security measures within Lalbagh have been reinforced, with increased patrolling to prevent such incidents in the future.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Pedestrians choose risky roads over faulty skywalks

Private agencies, responsible for maintaining skywalks, neglect their upkeep, ignoring condition of pedestrian facilities for years while continuing to profit from advertising revenue, says BBMP official

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Pedestrian skywalks, built across Bengaluru for public convenience, are turning into white elephants due to poor maintenance. Faulty lifts, lack of cleanliness, and inadequate infrastructure have forced pedestrians to cross traffic-heavy roads, leading to frequent minor accidents. Bengaluru has skywalks at 45 locations with high pedestrian and vehicle traffic, and work is underway for 10 more. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is said to have neglected the upkeep of these structures located near hospitals, government offices, markets, and bus stands.

Many skywalks have an excessive number of steps, making them inconvenient, resulting in pedestrians choosing to cross the road directly

Maintenance lapses by private agencies

A BBMP official opined that private agencies responsible for maintaining these skywalks have failed to fulfill their duties. "While they continue to profit from advertising revenue, they have ignored the upkeep of these pedestrian facilities for years," he said.

Pedestrians prefer risky roads

Many skywalks have an excessive number of steps, making them inconvenient. "The skywalk on Raja Ram Mohan Roy Road has 98 steps, and takes approximately 1 minute and 45 seconds to cross. In contrast, crossing the road directly takes just 10-12 seconds, prompting pedestrians to risk their lives in heavy traffic rather than use the skywalk. The non-functional lift at this location further discourages usage," said Skanda D, a regular walker. Similarly, the skywalk near Freedom Park has 87 steps but lacks a lift, making it difficult for thousands of people attending protests and gatherings at the park. Most choose to navigate the dense traffic instead of using the skywalk.

Neglected and unsafe skywalks

The skywalk near Kempegowda Road, connecting key buildings such as the Revenue Department, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Karnataka Housing Board, and St Martha's Hospital, is in a state of disrepair. It is filled with garbage, rusting, and crumbling, creating a safety hazard. The lift has been non-functional for years, and authorities have not made any efforts to repair it. Even the skywalk outside the BBMP headquarters, equipped with a lift and other amenities, remains underutilised, as pedestrians prefer to take a direct route across the road. At the Kengeri Bus Terminal, a skywalk has been open for public use for over a year, yet the lift remains non-functional. Senior citizens and individuals with health issues are struggling to climb the stairs. "With skywalks failing to serve their purpose, pedestrians are left with no option but to risk crossing busy roads, highlighting the urgent need for better maintenance and accessibility," added Anitha Kumari, a college student.

> **"With skywalks failing to serve their purpose, pedestrians have no option but to risk crossing busy roads**
> – Anitha Kumari, college student

Community effort restores littered footpath

Volunteers join hands with government bodies to address civic issues, demonstrating remarkable collaboration

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Over 50 volunteers from CGI teamed up with Indian Army personnel, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), and the Ugly Indians to clean the footpath on Artillery Road, near Gowthamapuram, that had been overrun by garbage, debris, and waste for years.

The road that leads from Lido Mall on Swami Vivekananda Road to Gowthamapuram and Cambridge Layout, along the campus of the 515 Army Base Workshop, had been plagued with issues of garbage dumping, open urination, and debris, forcing pedestrians to walk on busy roads, creating a safety risk.

Inset: The volunteers beautifying the compound wall on Artillery Road, near Gowthamapuram

Brigadier BS Budhwar, Commandant of 515 Army Base Workshop visited the spot and encouraged the participants, setting a fine example of civilian-military partnership to address common civic issues in the areas abutting military campuses. Several more such initiatives are being planned in other parts of the city, on footpaths abutting military campuses.

"I am very happy to be part of the beautification drive. We have created awareness among the public and residents not to throw garbage on the footpath. We want to thank Army officers for encouraging and supporting us," said Baktha Seelan, Divisional Supervisor, BBMP Marshals.

Roopa S of CGI expressed joy in being a part of the team that beautified the black spots on Artillery Road. "We started painting the compound wall at 8 am and completed the task by 10.30 am," noted Roopa.

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Trash pile-up

CV Raman Nagar

Uncollected garbage piling up on Varthur Road, Nagavarapalya, CV Raman Nagar (Opposite 9 to 9 Supermarket and Ganesha Temple).

Waste woes

Yelahanka

Garbage accumulation on Jakkur 80 Feet Road, near Raithara Santhe.

Debris dump

Coles Park

Construction debris dumped at the bottom of the slide in Coles Park.

Man held for city-wide bike thefts

The Yelahanka Upanagar Police have arrested a man involved in multiple two-wheeler thefts across the city and recovered seven stolen vehicles worth 3.5 lakh.

The case came to light after a BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) worker filed a complaint on January 8, stating that his two-wheeler was stolen while he was on duty near Venkateswara Garments Road, Puttenahalli. Following an investigation, the police apprehended the accused on March 8, at Veerasagara Main Road. Upon interrogation, he confessed to stealing six more two-wheelers from different locations. The stolen vehicles were found abandoned near the Railway Wheel and Axle Factory on Doddaballapur Main Road.

With his arrest, five cases of two-wheeler theft have been solved—three under Yelahanka Upanagar Police Station and two under Chikkajala Police Station. Efforts are ongoing to trace the owners of two recovered vehicles. The accused is currently under judicial custody and further investigations are underway.

Deputy bank manager scams elderly woman

A case of financial fraud has come to light after Girinagar police arrested a deputy bank manager and three others for cheating a 76-year-old woman of 50 lakh.

The victim, Savithramma, had an account at a private bank in Girinagar and regularly deposited large amounts in fixed deposits. She became acquainted with the accused, Meghana, a deputy manager at the bank, who gained her trust by offering assistance with banking transactions.

Taking advantage of this trust, Meghana allegedly convinced Savithramma to sign an RTGS transfer form, fraudulently transferring 50 lakh to an account belonging to Anwar Ghosh. Further investigation revealed that Meghana had planned the scam along with her husband, Shivaprasad.

The fraud came to light on February 12, when Savithramma checked her account balance and found the funds missing. When she confronted Meghana, the accused allegedly blamed her, saying she had authorised the transaction herself. Suspicious, the elderly woman filed a complaint with Girinagar police, leading to an investigation that exposed the fraud.

Following the probe, police arrested Meghana, her husband Shivaprasad, Anwar Ghosh, and another accomplice, Varadaraju Narayan Gaonkar. A case has been registered at Girinagar Police Station, and further investigation is underway.

₹14 lakh UPI fraud exposes banking security loophole

Missing SMS alerts and absence of PIN entry left victims unaware of fraudulent bank transactions for months; authorities are now investigating potential security lapses in banking system

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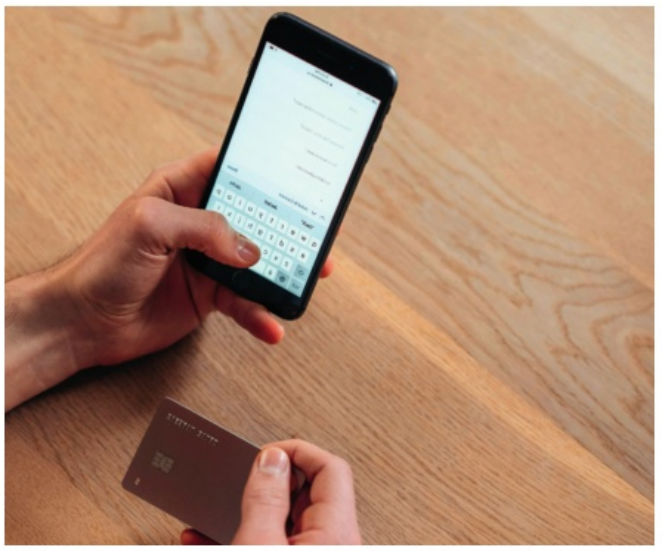
A citizen has approached the Central Division's Cyber Crime (CEN) police station, alleging fraudulent UPI transactions amounting to approximately ₹14.8 lakh from his wife's and son's private sector bank accounts. The complainant discovered the unauthorised transactions only recently, though they occurred between December 14, 2024, and February 21, 2025.

According to the complaint, all the fraudulent transactions were conducted via UPI without the victims entering their PINs or receiving any SMS notifications. This raises serious concerns about a potential loophole in banking security, as UPI transactions typically require two-factor authentication. The absence of alerts prevented the victims from detecting the fraud in real-time, allowing the scam to go unnoticed for months.



Without alerts, victims missed the fraud for months

Breakdown of fraudulent transactions

The complainant stated that his wife's and son's accounts were targeted, with both debit and credit transactions making it harder to detect the fraud initially.

In his wife's account, total fraudulent debts amounted to ₹8,54,698, while credits stood at ₹1,71,000, resulting in a net loss of ₹6,83,698.

In his son's account, fraudulent debits totalled ₹7,27,087, while credits amounted to ₹7,36,970.41, leading to a net difference of ₹9,883.41.

New cybercrime loophole?

This case highlights a troubling new dimension in cyber fraud: the lack of SMS alerts for unauthorised transactions. Typically, banks send real-time SMS alerts for every debit or credit, enabling account holders to take immediate action in case of fraud. However, in this instance, the victims were completely unaware of the transactions, suggesting that fraudsters may have found a way to bypass or suppress these notifications.

Cybercrime experts speculate that the fraudsters could have exploited a vulnerability in the bank's security system, used a cloned SIM card to intercept notifications, or manipulated banking apps to bypass authentication checks. The police are likely to seek technical expertise to determine how the fraud was executed and whether other customers are at risk.

Banks usually send SMS alerts for every transaction, allowing action against fraud. Here, victims remained unaware, indicating fraudsters suppressed them

Authorities are now investigating whether this is an isolated case or part of a larger financial fraud network. The complainant has urged authorities to intervene urgently to recover the lost funds and prevent similar breaches in the future.

As digital transactions become increasingly common, this case raises critical questions about the reliability of UPI security measures and the potential risks if banks fail to provide timely alerts. Investigations are underway.

HC clarifies notice rules under labour law

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The Karnataka High Court has ruled that when proposed changes affect all workers in an establishment with a registered Union or Association, individual notices under Section 9A of the Industrial Disputes Act 1947 and Rule 35 of the Industrial Disputes (Karnataka) Rules, 1957 are not mandatory. This decision came whilst approving the petition from Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) management.

The court specified that this ruling should not be interpreted as a blanket exemption from serving individual notices under Section 9A of the Act of 1947. The court noted that the ruling does not address situations where changes affect only select workers, as this particular case did not involve such circumstances.

The case originated from BEML management's challenge to a Labour court award from September 2013, which had deemed their July 21, 2006 notice regarding vacation leave calculations illegal.

The court concluded that displaying the Section 9A notice on the establishment's main entrance notice board and manager's office, along with sending a registered post to the Union secretary, constitutes valid notification to all workers.

Shouting isn't assault

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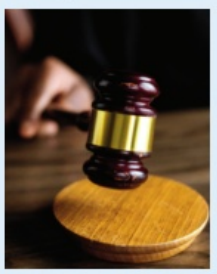
The Karnataka High Court has determined that for an offence under Section 353 of the Indian Penal Code, 1908 (IPC), there must be evidence of assault or criminal force against a public servant. The court clarified that merely raising one's voice, without physical force, does not constitute an offence under this section. Section 353 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) deals with the offence of assault or criminal force to deter a public servant from the discharge of his duty.

Justice M Nagaprasanna stated, "The summary of the findings of the charge sheet, as also, the statement of all the witnesses are unequivocal that the only allegation against the petitioner is speaking to the 2nd respondent/complainant by raising his voice. This would, in the considered view of this Court, not meet the ingredients that are necessary for an offence to become punishable under Section 353 of the IPC."

Advocate Prashant S Kadadevar represented the Petitioner, whilst High Court Government Pleader Jairam Siddi appeared for the Respondents.



Case background

A head constable filed a complaint against the Petitioner, a home guard, alleging voice-raising whilst requesting documents. Following a police investigation, a charge sheet was filed, and the Principal Civil Judge registered the complaint under Sections 353 and 506 of the IPC. The Petitioner sought to quash proceedings under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. The Petitioner maintained that the incident was exaggerated, with voice-raising being the sole allegation. The Respondents contended that five eyewitnesses warranted a trial.

The Court examined whether the Petitioner should face trial under Section 353 of the IPC. The Court noted, "Section 353 mandates that a public servant should be stopped from performing duties by usage of criminal force. There is no allegation in the case at hand that the petitioner indulged in assault of a public servant or used criminal force which came in the way of the public servant performing her duties."

The Court referenced the K Dhananjay v State of Karnataka (Cabinet Secretary) (2022) judgement, which established that Section 353 charges require allegations of assault or criminal force. Regarding Section 506, the Court observed that essential elements under Section 503 were absent. The Court concluded that continuing the trial would constitute legal process abuse and result in justice miscarriage.

The Court subsequently allowed the petition, quashing proceedings against the Petitioner before the Principal Civil Judge.

Human-wildlife clashes shrink

Ex-gratia payouts drop in Karnataka, but fund shortage delays some payments; activists seek better awareness, faster disbursal

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According to official data, human-wildlife cases in Karnataka have taken a downward trend this year. This has led to a reduction in the ex-gratia amount paid by the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD).

Between April and December 2024, the Department spent a little over Rs 25.57 crore on the victims of human-wildlife conflicts.

The amount was paid against a total of 20,497 cases under various heads, including crop damage, cattle death, human death, permanent and temporary disability, etc. While 15,795 cases of crop damage were registered in the given period, 2,664 cattle were killed, and 31 human deaths were reported.

In 2023, KFD released nearly Rs 30 crore as an ex-gratia amount in response to 26,658 conflict cases. Out of these, 21,460 cases were of crop damage, 3,256 were of cattle kills, and 36 human deaths.

> **"Many conflict cases still go unreported either due to lack of awareness or procedural complications**
>
> – Wildlife Conservationist

"Larger area abutting cropland has been barricaded using railway barricades this year. We have also reorganised the elephant task force and have slightly modified our strategy concerning the deputation of ETF. The Department has also adopted a human-centric approach to dealing with conflict situations by strengthening our early warning system. All these measures, coupled with good rainfall during monsoon, might have led to lower numbers of conflict cases. However, there are areas with elephants living outside forests. There is more to be done," said SK Malkhede, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden of Karnataka.

Wildlife activists and conservationists have acknowledged the drop in cases but add that there is room to improve the reach of the scheme and the benefits it provides to the victims. Spreading more awareness about the scheme and e-Parihara application, along with speedier disbursement of ex-gratia amount, are some measures suggested by the experts.

"Many conflict cases still go unreported either due to lack of awareness or procedural complications. While sometimes villagers are uninformed, more often than not, they choose not to claim ex-gratia. The senior forest officials should issue instructions to their subordinates regarding regular awareness programs about the scheme in their respective areas," said a wildlife conservationist.

Activists welcome the drop but call for better awareness, e-Parihara access, and faster payouts

KFD uses the e-Parihara application for the processing of ex-gratia claims for conflict cases. As per Government orders, ex-gratia of Rs 15 lakh is paid to the legal heir of the deceased person in case of death caused by human-wildlife conflict situations. In the case of permanent disability caused by wild animals, an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh is paid to a person, and in the case of partial disability, an ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh is paid.

A monthly pension of Rs 4,000 for five years is also given along with the ex-gratia to the family of a person killed by wild animals and for permanent disability caused by wild animals. In the case of the loss of domestic animals such as cows, ox, and buffalo due to wild animal attack, an ex-gratia payment to the owners of such animals is enhanced from Rs 10,000 to Rs 30,000 as per the rates of the State Disaster Response Fund.

"Information such as ex-gratia amount for different case heads and required documents should be displayed in every range forest office in regional language. There is still this misconception among villagers and farmers that the ex-gratia amount paid by KFD is meagre, which is not the case," said an activist.

Lack of fund

Cases of ex-gratia payment dragged due to lack of funds have been aplenty. According to the officials, all payment logs up till January 2025 will be cleared soon.

"We are facing a shortage of more than Rs 25 crore in the payment. Towards this, the department received Rs 15 crore from the state government on Wednesday. We will use this amount to clear all the ex-gratia bills till January. Compensation in case of human deaths is never delayed, though," said a senior KFD official.

88% tax collected so far

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had set a property tax collection target of ₹5,210 crore for the financial year 2024-25 but has managed to collect only ₹4,604 crore so far, achieving 88.36% of the target. With the financial year coming to an end this month, Special Commissioner (Revenue) Munish Moudgil has directed zonal officers to intensify efforts in collecting outstanding property tax. He emphasised the need for swift action, particularly from institutions and commercial establishments with high pending dues, urging officials to conduct visits and ensure tax collection meets the set target.

A BBMP official said, "To streamline property ownership documentation, BBMP has been actively issuing e-Khatas since the system's implementation in October 2024. So far, 2.25 lakh final e-Khatas have been issued to citizens. To expedite the process further, BBMP has introduced an initiative allowing young and local entrepreneurs to participate in providing e-Khata services. Interested individuals can register through the BBMP website and earn money without any fee payment to the BBMP." — BMB

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Not you, not you... it's us, it's us!

The recent Legislative Council session witnessed verbal exchanges over the issue of pourakarmika wages, with both ruling and opposition parties swinging their bats to claim credit. During the Q&A session, opposition members raised concerns about the welfare of pourakarmikas. Responding to this, Minister Byrathi Suresh confidently declared, "It was our government that made pourakarmikas permanent! We stand for the poor!" Not one to let that slide, opposition leader Chalavadi Narayanaswamy hit back: "Our government took bold steps on this issue long before! Are you trying to start a credit war here?" Then came Minister Eshwar Khandre, raising his voice in full force: "No, no! It wasn't you—it was us!" The opposition benches roared back: "No, no! It was us, not you!" Meanwhile, Urban Development Minister Rahim Khan tried to calm the storm, assuring, "We will resolve the issue within three months." No sooner had he spoken than the opposition pounced: "Look! Even the minister agrees!" Khan quickly clarified, "I wasn't talking about salary payments. I was referring to the timeline for making contract pourakarmikas permanent."

Power struggles

The recent Congress legislative party meeting saw a heated discussion on ministers' working styles, with a firm demand that they show due respect to MLAs. Speaking to reporters at Vidhana Soudha, Congress MLA Belur Gopalakrishna made his stance crystal clear: "Ministers didn't descend from the heavens! They must respect MLAs. After all, without MLAs, they wouldn't be ministers in the first place!" The meeting also addressed concerns that ministers aren't cooperating with MLAs on constituency matters.

Guess who gave Congress a hand?

Ever wondered where the Congress party's iconic 'Hand' symbol came from? And who gifted it? The answer popped up in an unexpected setting—during a Karnataka Assembly Q&A session. While pushing for a Jain Corporation, Congress MLA Laxman Savadi dropped an intriguing historical nugget. He revealed that back in Indira Gandhi's era, a Karnataka-born Jain Muni, Vidyanand Maharaj, advised the party to ditch the 'Cow and Calf' symbol and adopt the 'Hand' instead. His blessing? "Use this symbol, build the party, and you will flourish and this was adopted!"

Lone rebel

The recent Monday's Karnataka Assembly session had all the drama of a political thriller. BJP MLA ST Somashekhar, instead of backing his party, ended up defending the ruling government—much to the fury of his BJP colleagues. During discussions on the 'Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill', the opposition stood firm in its opposition, but Somashekhar surprised everyone by welcoming the move. "Some people are opposing for no reason, but the government's intent is right," he declared, sending shockwaves through BJP ranks. The situation got even more awkward when, while opposition MLAs staged a walkout in protest, Somashekhar casually stayed put in his seat. This was the last straw for Tumakuru Rural MLA B Suresh Gowda, who erupted in anger: "Show some respect to the party you represent. Or better yet, move over to the ruling party's side and take a seat there!" But Somashekhar wasn't one to back down. With a dismissive "Go, go!" he waved off the criticism—leaving the Assembly buzzing with political tension.

Birthday wishes now

Karnataka Assembly Speaker UT Khader introduced the reading of names of first arrivals and reciting the Preamble on Day 1, he's now started a brand-new tradition: birthday wishes for MLAs during sessions! On Monday last, as the Assembly kicked off, Khader announced that going forward, MLAs celebrating their birthdays during a session would receive official wishes. He immediately set the ball rolling by extending greetings to Food Minister KH Muniyappa, Small Scale Industries Minister Sharanabasappa Darshanapur, Congress MLA Allam Prabhu Patil, and BJP MLAs Basavaraj Mattimod and Umesh Jadhav. Turns out, this idea was inspired by a Parliamentary tradition, and Muniyappa had suggested implementing it here too. But he didn't stop at just birthday wishes—he added a cheeky twist: "Those celebrating should treat us to a meal. Don't worry, you don't have to foot the bill… we'll just deduct it from your salary!"

Political jabs

During the session, BJP leader CT Ravi teased Shivakumar, asking if he had received good news recently. In response, the DyCM humorously quoted a Sanskrit verse: "Keeping people happy is the true worship of God." He quipped that he has been steadily rising in politics since his first Assembly election in 1984, despite facing setbacks, including imprisonment in Tihar Jail. As the discussion continued, Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti humorously warned Shivakumar, "Everyone is praising you today. Stay cautious till the evening."

'Give us a grant, and we'll be there at 7 am!'

Not one to miss a chance for some lighthearted politics, BJP MLA Siddu Savadi jokingly pointed out that the names of early attendees weren't read that day. Seizing the moment, fellow BJP MLA SR Vishwanath quipped: "If you offer us a special grant, we'll show up at 7 am sharp! A lakh would be nice." — Sridhar Vivan

BM SIMPLY PUT

Mapping the ins and outs of illegal route to transport the yellow metal

All about gold smuggling from Dubai

The Ranya Rao (pic) case is reported to be Karnataka's second-largest gold smuggling incident, involving the seizure of 14.02 kg of illegal gold at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport. In fact, the airport has witnessed numerous cases of gold smuggling, with passengers arriving in style but concealing illegal gold. The latest addition to this list is actress Ranya Rao, who was caught carrying kilos of smuggled gold. The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials have arrested her, unveiling a major international gold smuggling network.

Humans as carriers

Sources said that gold smuggling from Dubai to India is not a new phenomenon. Price fluctuations, festival purchases, and traditional gold investments are common in India, but there exists a parallel underground market where gold is smuggled in bulk. International gold smuggling syndicates operate in kilograms, not grams, making it a lucrative yet illegal trade.

High-profile arrest

Actress Ranya Rao, who is also the step daughter of Karnataka Police Housing Corporation DGP K Ramachandra Rao, was arrested by the DRI at Bengaluru airport. The incident is reminiscent of the Kerala gold smuggling case involving Swapna Suresh two years ago. Authorities had been tracking Ranya Rao's frequent international trips, suspecting her involvement in gold smuggling. A targeted operation confirmed these suspicions. The question now is—why is Dubai the primary hub for illegal gold smuggling into India?

Why is gold smuggled from Dubai?

Sources said that gold prices in Dubai are lower than in India, and import duties are minimal, making it a hotspot for smugglers. Smuggled gold from various countries is easily transported to Dubai's mini-markets and then shipped illegally to other destinations, including India. The lack of stringent enforcement in Dubai provides smugglers with an advantage. Even when sold at lower prices, smugglers still make significant profits, and hawala networks facilitate large-scale gold entry into India.

Who can legally carry gold from Dubai?

Visitors on a tourist visa cannot bring gold jewellery from Dubai. However, passengers who have lived there for at least a year can legally carry up to 20-30 grams duty-free. Employees working in Dubai for more than a year can bring 20-50 grams under specific conditions. Exceeding these limits without declaring gold to customs is considered a commercial offence.

Lax laws

Nearly 98% of arrested smugglers secure bail easily, as cases are processed under the 1960 Customs Act and the Prevention of Illicit Activities Act but often fail to result in strict punishment. Smuggling statistics paint a concerning picture, with nearly 100 kg of gold being smuggled into India daily through various airports and over 150 tonnes entering the country illegally every year, significantly impacting the economy. Kerala leads in smuggling cases, while major operations are also traced to Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh. Alarmingly, only 5% of smuggled gold is intercepted, while the rest seamlessly enters Indian markets undetected, fueling the underground economy and evading taxation.

How is gold smuggled?

DRI officials said that smugglers adopt innovative methods to evade detection, utilizing hidden compartments in aircraft, which are later retrieved by airport cleaning staff or security personnel. They conceal gold in personal items such as shoes, clothing, tablet covers, food packets, torches, remote controllers, toys, and even in liquid form. A sophisticated technique known as gold paste technology allows smugglers to spread gold onto fabric or hide it inside shirt buttons, making detection even more challenging. Some go to extreme lengths by filling condoms with gold, either swallowing them or concealing them inside their bodies, further complicating enforcement efforts.

Kerala remains smuggling hub

The Union Finance Ministry's report reveals Kerala as the top gold smuggling state in India. Major smuggling routes operate through Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, and Kannur airports. Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karnataka also witness significant illegal imports.

What happens to seized gold?

Legally imported gold requires payment of customs duties. If gold is smuggled but caught, the authorities impose fines and taxes. However, gold seized in smuggling operations is confiscated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Smugglers are well-trained

Gold smuggling networks are run by a few experienced jewellery traders and organised syndicates in Dubai and other Gulf nations. They lure desperate travellers with financial incentives, offering 1.5 lakh per kg of smuggled gold.

Flashback

In 1988, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) had seized 300 kg of smuggled gold in Gangolli, marking one of the biggest gold busts in Indian history. The gold, smuggled via ships from Dubai, was stored in Gangolli before being distributed. The operation was led by Karnataka officer Manohar, who seized 2,749 gold biscuits in a well-planned raid.

Drunk riding: Man attacks cop

A private bank employee and his female friend were arrested by Mahadevapura police for allegedly assaulting a woman police officer during a routine drunk driving check in KR Puram on Saturday night.

The accused, Rakesh Kumar, was riding a bike with his friend from Ramamurthy Nagar to Singenapalya when they were stopped by police for inspection. Upon testing, officers found that Rakesh was under the influence of alcohol. His bike was seized, and he was issued a notice to visit the police station the following day. However, instead of complying, Rakesh engaged in a heated argument with Sub-Inspector Anitha Kumari, which soon escalated.

When he attacked the officer, she alerted her seniors. A team from Mahadevapura police station arrived at the scene and took Rakesh and his friend into custody on charges of assaulting a government servant on duty. -BMB

3 labourers murdered at site

Three labourers from Bihar were found murdered during a Holi celebration at a 14-storied under-construction apartment in Sarjapur here, police said on Sunday. The deceased have been identified as Radhe Shyam, Deepu, and Ansu of Gopalganj in Bihar.

The incident occurred when the victims were celebrating Holi on Saturday evening along with those workers from their hometown, who were employed in nearby sites, police said.

"We received a call regarding the murder. We rushed to the spot. Upon arrival, we gathered preliminary information that the victims were plumbing and construction workers," C K Baba, Superintendent of Police, Bengaluru Rural said. The fight reportedly started after one of the victims received a phone call from the sister of an accused labourer. The victim was in touch with his sister for quite some time now and this led to a heated argument. The situation escalated into a violent altercation. -PTI

Doc in dock for assaulting elderly in-laws

The medical education department has issued a show cause notice to a doctor from Victoria Hospital for allegedly assaulting her elderly in-laws and harassing them along with her children, officials said on Sunday.

According to an official statement, a video of Dr Priyadarshini, an emergency medical officer at Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI), allegedly assaulting her elderly in-laws along with her children recently went viral. "Reports indicate she has been harassing them for the past ten years. She had filed for divorce but allegedly went to her in-laws' residence and attacked them. A case has been registered with the police in this incident," it stated. A police officer said the matter came to light on March 14 when the video went viral. The doctor's father-in-law approached with a complaint at Annapurneshwari Nagar police station. -PTI

1 student dies, 28 hospitalised in suspected food poisoning case in Mandya

In a suspected case of food poisoning, a 13-year-old boy died, and 28 other inmates of an unauthorised hostel run by a private school here were admitted to the hospital on Sunday after complaining of stomach pain following the consumption of food prepared for Holi celebrations, police said.

The deceased, identified as Kerlong, hailed from Meghalaya, they added.

The incident occurred at Gokula Vidya Samsthe in T Kagepura village in Malavalli taluk of Mandya district, police said.

Citing a preliminary investigation, Mallikarjun Baladandi, Superintendent of Police (Mandya), told PTI that the school, which has been operating since 1989, did not have a license to run a hostel.

The management was illegally operating the hostel on the first floor of the school building without proper infrastructure, including toilets for children.

A total of 202 students study at the school from LKG to Class 8, with about 30 students—most of them from Meghalaya—staying at the hostel. The school reportedly follows an arrangement where hostel students receive leftover food from nearby events, celebrations, or weddings, he said.

On March 14, a group from Malavalli organised a feast as part of Holi celebrations, serving vegetable pulao and chutney for breakfast. The leftover food was later distributed to 30 students at the school hostel, police said.

Of these 30 students, 24 are from Meghalaya, while the remaining are locals, he added.

On March 14, none of the students reported uneasiness, pain, or illness. However, the next day, six students complained of stomach pain and were admitted to the hospital, he said.

On Sunday, a 13-year-old boy collapsed and was rushed to the hospital, where he was declared dead. Among the 28 hospitalised students, seven are in critical condition, and one is on a ventilator, he stated.

"Our top priority is treating the affected students and ensuring their recovery. An investigation will be conducted into the school's facilities, permissions, and food suppliers, and appropriate legal action will be taken

"We have registered a case under Section 286 (Negligent conduct concerning a poisonous substance) and Section 106 (Causing death by negligence) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and have arrested three people in connection with the incident," he added.

Those arrested include the cook who prepared the food, the hostel warden for distributing leftover food without checking its quality, and the school owner for negligence, he said.

Mandya Deputy Commissioner Dr Kumar told reporters that the health department was informed on March 15, and officials visited the school. In total, 30 children consumed the food and suffered food poisoning.

"Unfortunately, a 13-year-old student has died, which is deeply saddening. We have informed his parents. The remaining 29 students are receiving treatment, with eight already shifted to Mandya Institute of Medical Sciences (MIMS). Orders have been issued to transfer the other students as well, as MIMS has expert doctors," he said.

"Our top priority is treating the affected students and ensuring their recovery. An investigation will be conducted into the school's facilities, permissions, and food suppliers, and appropriate legal action will be taken," he added.

"Prima facie, the school's negligence is evident—how did they allow an external party to supply food without permission? They had no authorisation to run a hostel," he stated.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah took to 'X' and expressed his grief over the incident, stating that it was heartbreaking to learn about the student's death and the hospitalisation of several others after consuming food at the private residential school in T Kagepura. **PTI**

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I Bhuvana Sriram D/O, A R Ramachandran R/o 201, B-block, Srj Residency, Pr Layout, Munnekollal, Bangalore-560037 have changed my name to R Bhuvana Chandran.

I, Parag Jayant Deshpande R/o D 407, Srinidhi The Central Park, L B Shastri Nagar, Vimanapura Post, Bangalore 560017 have changed my minor daughter's name from Adwaya to Adwaya Parag Deshpande.

I, Shivubai Taranal / Pooja Shankar Gouda W/o Shankargowda R/a No.20, 5th Main, 3rd Cross, CPV Block, Gangenahalli, Ganganagar, Bengaluru-560032. Have Changed My Name From SHIVUBAI TARANAL / Pooja Shankar Gouda To POOJA. Vide Affidavit Date: 13.03.2025. Sworn Before Notary: Sumangala Hegde.

I Rimzim Deepak Mehrotra W/O, Deepak Mehrotra R/o Flat No 212, Ssvr Crescent, Kaithota Main Road, Nagondanahalli, Whitefield, Bengaluru - 560066, Karnataka have changed my name to Rimzim Seth.

I, NIRMALA DANIEL, W/o Daniel Prasanna Keerthi, residing at #11, 'BETHEL', 5th Main, 4th Cross, Ramachandra ppa Layout, Kariyanapalya, Lingarajapuram, Bengaluru-560084 have changed my name to NIRMALA .I, vide affidavit No. 152 dt: 14.03.2025 before notary Meer Hassan, Bangalore

I, Shankar Gouda S/o Gurunatha Gouda R/a No.213/A/B, 56th Cross, 10th Main, 4th Block, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560010. Have Changed My Name From SHANKAR GOUDA To SHANKARGOWDA. Vide Affidavit Date: 11.03.2025. Sworn Before Notary: Sumangala Hegde.

I, Sonia Florence R/a No.6 E, No.4th Street, Old Madras Road, Ulsoor, B'lore-560008. Have Changed To SONIA FLORENCE SELESTIN. Afft Dt: 15.03.2025. Sworn Before Notary : Devaraju.E

CHANGE-OF-NAME

This is to declare that I, Yogita, aged about 42 years, wife of Sri. Mothilal Jain, daughter of Smt. Saritha and Sri. Sajjan Raj, R/at:No.58, Police Road, Ranasinghpet, Bangalore-560053, have changed my name hitherto stated and referred to as Yogita, Yogita Jain, Yogita Nahar, Yashika, Yogita .S. Nahar or Yogita. M. to Yogita Jain vide affidavit sworn to before Notary Sri. P.N. Nagesha, on the 13th day of March, 2025, at Bengaluru. Hereinafter, I wish to be called and known for all acts, deeds and things as YOGITA JAIN only.
Sd/- YOGITA JAIN.
Place: Bengaluru.
Date : 13-03-2025

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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APR: 5, 15, 18, 20 JUN: 5*, 14*

AMRITSAR VAISHNODEVI SRINAGAR 16 DAYS
MAR: 29 APR: 6, 8, 11, 18, 23, 30 MAY: 6, 12, 18, 24, 30

KASHI AYODHYA GAYA/HARIDWAR* 11/16* DAYS
APR: 13*, 14, 20* 20, 27* MAY: 3, 9, 11*, 15, 23, 24* JUN: 1*, 2, 8, 8* 19

KASHI AYODHYA/BADRI KEDAR* 14*/21 DAYS
APRIL: 22, 27, 29* MAY: 3, 9, 10*, 15, 16*, 21, 22*, 28* JUN: 2, 8, 9*

CHAR DHAM 19 DAYS:
MAY 20, 26 JUN: 1, 7, 13, 17, 24 JUL: 1

SHIMLA MANALI/MUSSOORIE NAINITAL* 15/14* DAYS
APR: 2, 14*, 30

Criminals find loopholes to bypass tracking mechanisms

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Hurdles to find phones

Despite the technological advancements in tracking lost gadgets, police officials continue to struggle with mobile phone recovery. A senior police official explained the various challenges they face, starting with the delay in reporting. "Many victims take time to report the theft, which allows culprits to either switch off the phone or change the SIM card, making tracking much harder," he said.

One of the key hurdles is the black-market trade of stolen mobiles. Criminals have found loopholes to bypass tracking mechanisms by flashing the phone or altering it through illegal software. Once it is changed, the phone essentially becomes untraceable through conventional tracking methods.

Another growing concern is the sale of stolen mobile phones in different states or even across borders. "These phones are often smuggled into neighbouring states or sent to international black markets where they are sold as second-hand devices. Tracking them becomes nearly impossible," added another officer.

Low awareness

While the CEIR portal has been introduced as a centralised system to track and block stolen mobile phones, awareness remains low. Many victims are unaware of the process to register their lost phones, leading to fewer cases being officially recorded. The police urged citizens to immediately report lost or stolen devices through the CEIR website and file an FIR at the nearest police station.

North Division DCP told BM that the introduction of this portal has significantly improved the ability to trace lost phones. "Earlier, tracking a Rs 10,000 mobile across different states was challenging. However, with this system, the IMEI number is automatically monitored, and if a stolen phone is used, the portal alerts police officials, making recovery easier. Manually tracing such cases was difficult, as accused individuals would switch off the phone, making it uncertain when it would be turned on again. This portal has been invaluable in overcoming those challenges by providing real-time alerts whenever a stolen mobile is switched on," the DCP said.

Increase in narcotics cases too

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

is delayed from 18 to 25 years. Parents are also issued strict warnings about their child's reckless behaviour. Moreover, blood samples of offenders are sent for testing, and if they are found under the influence of banned substances, the case is transferred to the law-and-order division.

"In many cases, altered vehicles are used for wheeling. Once seized, such vehicles are released only at the court level and not at the station level," DCP Traffic (West) added.

Social media's role

The city has seen a significant rise in overall cases. In 2023, Bengaluru City Police registered 68,518 cases, a sharp increase from 46,187 cases in 2022. This surge is largely attributed to increased awareness and proactive policing measures, including suo motu case registration, FIRs based on 112 control room complaints, and the implementation of e-FIR initiatives.

With law enforcement keeping a close watch, both on the streets and online, offenders are running out of places to hide.

On the other hand, social media has become an important tool for the police in identifying and apprehending offenders. Videos of minors performing dangerous stunts often circulate online, enabling authorities to take swift action. In a recent incident, a video depicting individuals performing reckless scooter stunts on a busy road in the city led to police action against 44 individuals. Such online evidence facilitates prompt identification and enforcement measures.

The police officials note that while they crackdown on the wheelie menace, there have also been cases where these minor offenders have been found in the influence of banned substances. They said that the social media posts have helped them crack down a larger number of such cases.

Into the washing machine

How often should I wash my exercise clothes?

When you come home from a run or a sweaty gym session, do you immediately fling your clothes into the washing machine for a hot cycle? Or do you leave them on a chair (or the floordrobe) so you can wear them again tomorrow?

Earlier this year, the French government caused a stir with advice about how often you should wash your clothes. For sports clothes, it recommends up to three wears before you wash them.

This stems from legitimate environmental concerns – each laundry cycle consumes significant water and energy. Frequent washing can also degrade fabrics more quickly, contributing to textile waste.

But what about our health? If the thought of rewearing your stinky t-shirt or damp sports bra makes you squeamish, here's what you need to know.

Sports clothes and sweat

In the past, exercise clothing was usually made from natural fibres (mainly cotton). Now, it's mostly made of high-performance synthetic fabrics. These are designed to manage moisture, regulate temperature, improve breathability and control odour.

However research has shown this kind of exercise clothing, particularly synthetic fabrics, can harbour significant amounts of bacteria after just one use.

Polyester traps moisture, creating the warm, humid micro-environments bacteria prefer.

When clothing is damp, including from sweat, bacteria multiplies substantially much faster. There is a direct correlation between how much bacteria is present and how intense the smell is.

However, research shows innovations in textiles, such as the integration of silver nanoparticles in fibres, essential oil-based treatments, long-lasting antimicrobial treatments and structural fibre innovations are are making garments more durable and better at controlling bacteria.

> **Research has shown this kind of exercise clothing, particularly synthetic fabrics, can harbour significant amounts of bacteria after just one use**

So, is it safe to rewear gym clothes?

This depends on several factors:

Fabric type

Natural fibres such as cotton multiply fewer odour-causing bacteria than synthetics. So if you wear these fabrics to exercise in, they may last a few wears before needing a wash.

Exercise intensity and sweat level

Low-intensity activities that generate minimal or low sweat (including gentle yoga or walking), may allow for more re-wears than high-intensity workouts, as bacterial proliferation correlates directly with moisture levels in fabrics.

(In fact, the French government advice acknowledges how often you wash your sports clothes depends on how much you sweat.)

Season

Climate (temperature, humidity and airflow) significantly affects how much bacteria grows on fabrics. So it may be more reasonable to wash your clothes less in cooler months, when you sweat less.

Personal health

Some people should exercise greater caution rewearing gym clothes. For example, people with skin conditions, compromised immune systems and those prone to skin infections. So, if you're wearing a cotton t-shirt and shorts do something light – such as a walk in the cool morning air – you might get away with wearing them again once or twice (especially if you air them properly between use). But synthetic performance wear, or any clothes you wear to do moderate or intense workouts, should be washed after each use (a cold wash cycle is fine). This is important for garments in contact with high-bacteria areas such as underarms, groin or feet.

Tips for clothes between wears:

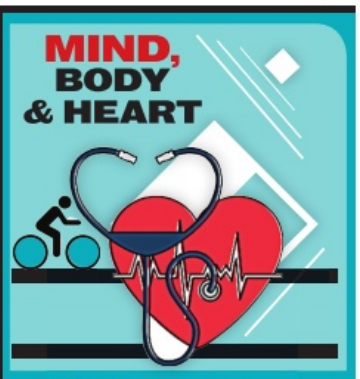
Turn garments inside-out (this exposes the bacteria to the air) and hang them up immediately after exercise

- Ensure items are completely dry before storing
- Store in well-ventilated areas, never in closed containers such as a washing hamper or bag
- When possible, hang clothes in the sun – brief UV exposure provides natural antimicrobial benefits
- Keep items you've worn away from clean clothes.

The bottom line

In the end, it's up to personal choice – each of us has to weigh up the environmental benefits with potential health concerns and exercise habits. But some items should always be washed after each use: sports bras and underwear, socks, anything visibly soiled or smelly, and any clothing worn during high-intensity workouts or in hot weather.

(By Carolina Quintero Rodriguez, RMIT University, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Weight-loss foods

Weight-loss foods

Ghee and coconut oil
Rich in medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs), ghee and coconut oil are unexpected weight loss allies. With their ability to increase metabolism, promote fullness, and aid in food absorption, these healthy fats provide a special benefit for long-term weight loss.

Quinoa
Widely regarded as a superfood, quinoa is high in protein and fibre, both of which help you feel full. Including quinoa in your meals will help control appetite and reduce cravings, which can ultimately aid in weight loss management and achieve the goal of healthy eating.

Greek yoghurt and homemade curd
Packed with nutrients, this creamy treat is not only a delicious snack; the protein and probiotic bacteria found in yoghurt help with digestion and increase feelings of fullness, which means you'll eat less during the day. Yoghurt also helps in maintaining gut health.

Chia seeds
Chia seeds are quite small but loaded with nutrients that are helpful for weight management. Chia seeds are packed with fibre and omega-3 fatty acids, which support a healthy metabolism and encourage a feeling of fullness. Chia seeds are a great way to manage blood sugar levels and reduce appetite.

Lentils
Lentils are a nutritional powerhouse since they are high in protein and fibre. Lentils are a great complement to any weight loss meal plan since they stimulate feelings of fullness and help balance blood sugar levels.

Apple cider vinegar
A tiny amount of apple cider vinegar taken prior to meals might help regulate hunger and facilitate digestion and good absorption. **– Femina**

MIRRORLIGHTS

Ditch the butterflies, find the one

If you've ever come across that viral clip edited into every other meme saying "He's a good man, Savannah!" – originally from the movie Waiting to Exhale (1995) – you already know the internet's consensus on one thing: find a good man. Now it's time to get into the rulebook for finding the one once you stop chasing butterflies.

Home is where the heart is

You're looking for someone who shares values similar to yours. Their upbringing might be the same or different, but, if there is compassion and understanding, it makes all the difference. The kind of person you want to come back to every day, whether it is to vent or to melt in their arms. If they are your safe place, you know you've found the one.

Spotting the right flag

You should be able to see what flag they are waving because the green ones stay while the rest just mumble words without actions. Know thyself first and what matters to you in the long run rather than fall for someone who only spices up your life momentarily.

No games, just love

Why are you still pondering over mixed signals? Haven't you heard it already? A mixed signal is no signal. Hot and cold behaviour, love bombing, and all those

inconsistent mind games that make you question whether they love you – if love comes with that much doubt, there's already an underlying issue. The one for you will always make it clear that they are there, they love you, and they have eyes only for you. No games, just the pure intention to shower you with love.

Slow burn > Wildfire

What even is that kind of love that rushes in like a tidal wave, takes you to the top of a mountain, then throws you into the depths of hell? The kind that burns you from the inside out and leaves you with nothing but trauma, making you useless for any good potential partner, is definitely not love. Find someone who unfolds slowly, like a friend who takes the time to understand your layers and patiently discovers the infinite wholeness of you. The one you can call a slow burn because that is the kind that lasts.

–Parul Karn, The Femina

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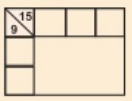
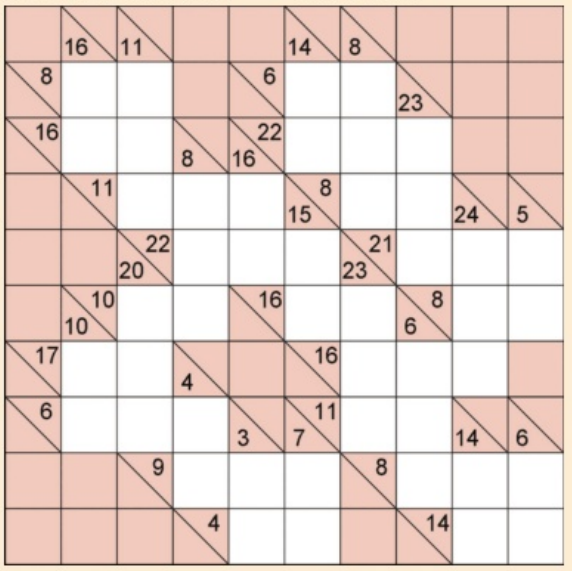
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

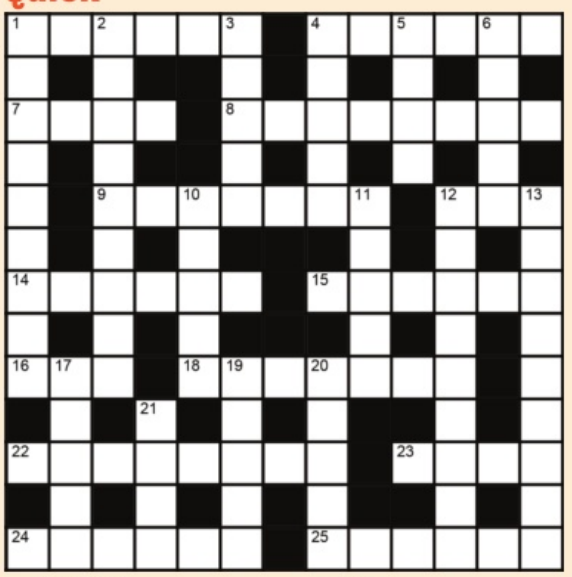


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Gambol (6)
4 Wanderers (6)
7 The green-eyed monster (4)
8 Entailed (8)
9 ___ Market: Market In Shivajinagar (7)
12 Run around and get this vessel? (3)
14 Almost (6)
15 German songs (6)
16 Might (3)
18 Not as old (7)
22 1983 World Cup winning captain (5,3)
23 Roman eight (4)
24 Make cuts in a movie (6)
25 Regal or royal (6)

DOWN

1 Pen name (9)
2 Opponent or enemy (9)
3 Revises copy (5)
4 Of the fleet (5)
5 Gentle in temper (4)
6 Dismal, gloomy (5)
10 Taint (5)
11 Not telling the truth (5)
12 A minion or a servant? (9)
13 Usual state (9)
17 Demean (5)
19 Stranger (5)
20 Tennis legend ___ Djokovic (5)
21 Fruits or small diagrams? (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: V EQUALS T

VJ NSS LNXOG VJ JVTGAC, JMG WOCV EQACV LNXOG JVTGAC.

Linemaro

You are so beautiful that you give the sun a reason to shine

Mindchow

Astronomy is perhaps the science whose discoveries owe least to chance, in which human understanding appears in its whole magnitude, and through which man can best learn how small he is

Joke of the day

Doctor: I am not exactly sure of the cause. I think it could be due to alcohol.
Patient: That's OK. I will come back when you are sober.

Loop

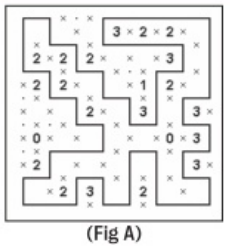
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

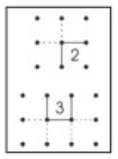
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

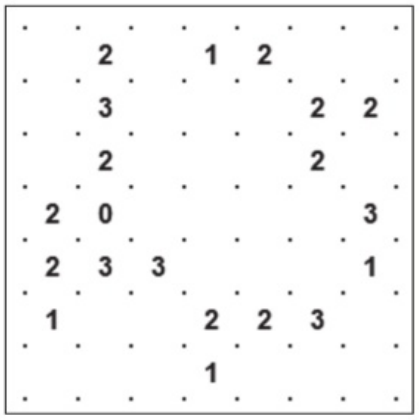
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



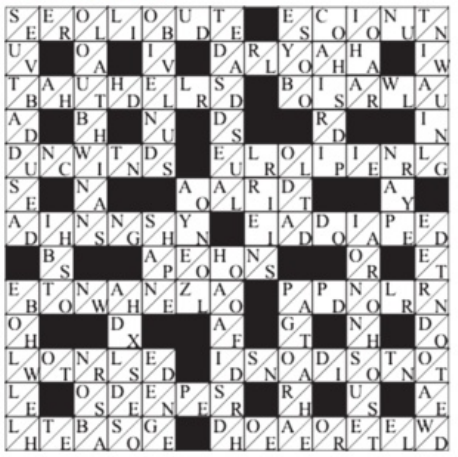
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



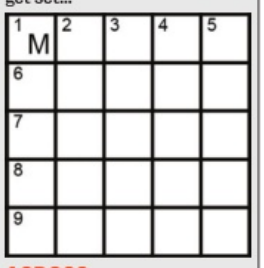
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

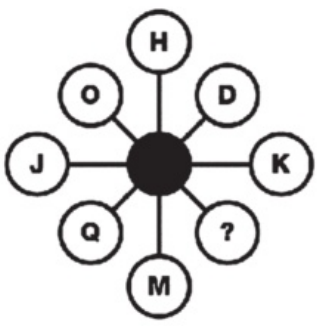
1 Smalt; 6 Mania; 7 Nosed; 8 A lark; 9 Tills

DOWN

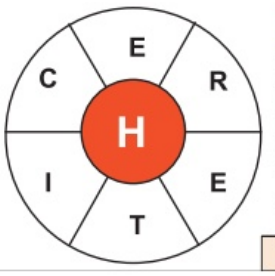
1 Asks M; 2 To ram; 3 Liana; 4 Ad Lit; 5 Sell N

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

12 Average; 14 Good; 16 Outstanding

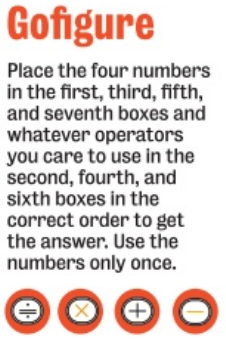
SudokuChallenge

	9			5				1
		8			7			
3	6	7	9		8			
5					9	6	4	
	4	3	1					2
			2		5	3	6	4
			7			1		
4				6			5	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 8

1 2 4 7

Medium = 16

1 2 5 8

Hard = 53

2 3 5 8

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

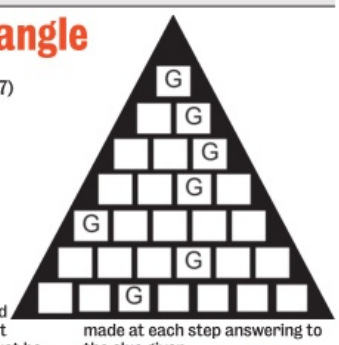
Differences: 1. Finger is moved. 2. Tie is missing. 3. Desk is not as wide. 4. Paper is longer. 5. Man is moved. 6. Bandage on head is reversed.

Riddler

Feed me and I live, give me drink and I die. What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 Gram, abbr.
2 Atomic number(47)
3 Cloth piece
4 Strong reaction
5 Rank
6 Peril
7 Riled

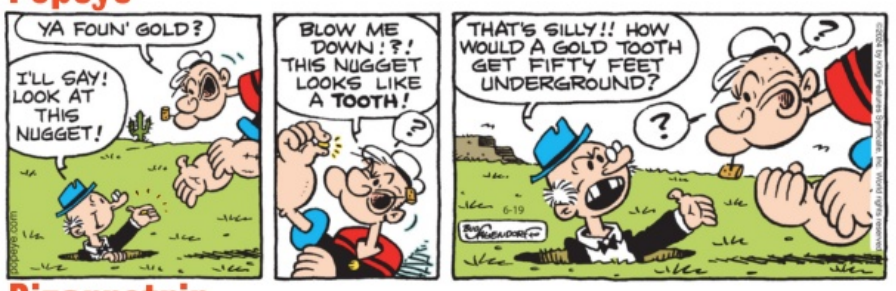


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


YA FOUN' GOLD?
I'LL SAY! LOOK AT THIS NUGGET!
BLOW ME DOWN!?! THIS NUGGET LOOKS LIKE A TOOTH!
THAT'S SILLY!! HOW WOULD A GOLD TOOTH GET FIFTY FEET UNDERGROUND?
?
6-19

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME. YOU'LL GET BETTER WITH PRACTICE.
GIVE ME A MAKEUP WIPE. I'M TRYING AGAIN.
YOU'RE GONNA USE UP ALL MY MAKEUP PRACTICING! SHOO!!
ALRIGHT, ENOUGH!
HART OF THE CITY © 2024 KASSIRER SCHEEL
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

I HAVE TO SAY...
YOU'RE CERTAINLY PLAYING THESE CAROLS LIKE THEY'VE NEVER BEEN PLAYED BEFORE!
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
12-10

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today is favourable for your work, and you may perform well professionally. Your boss may assign you new responsibilities, potentially leading to a promotion. Disputes with your partner are likely to be resolved. You may consider lending money to invest in assets. Your child's health may improve, and you will likely make some investments for their future.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You may be blessed by the Moon today. Love is in the air in your personal life, and singles may find a suitable match. Professionally, you are likely to do well, with strong support from friends and colleagues. Investments in gems and jewellery may bring positive gains in the near future. However, you should be cautious about the health of elderly family members.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Due to a favourable planetary alignment, you may feel happy and energetic, enhancing your reputation among those around you. You may also spend time studying intellectual subjects, which will contribute to your personal growth.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
The start of the day may feel dull, but by late evening, you will be able to control any negativity. You may establish new professional connections that could help you revamp your business plans. However, it is advised to carefully read any documents before signing them.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
With blessings, you may gain control over your indecisiveness today. Your child's health is improving, and your colleagues will be supportive, leading to success in your projects. You may receive incentives along with your salary. Those involved in dairy, water projects, grains, homemaking, art, and culture may experience positive outcomes.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You will be passionate about your work today. However, it is advisable not to mix emotions with logic when making important decisions. Trust your intuition when dealing with business, job matters, and investments. Though the workload may be high, blessings from elders will help you manage challenges effectively.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may be busy with domestic matters. Your interest in art, movies, and fashion may enhance your creativity. You may spend money on artefacts or household items to improve your social status. Your interactions with others will be polite, and you may plan a trip with family or friends.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
You may feel happier and more confident today, with increased inner vitality. A good night's sleep will leave you feeling refreshed. However, avoid being careless in financial, professional, and academic decisions. You may enjoy romantic moments with your spouse, but be mindful of self-respect issues—patience is key to maintaining harmony.

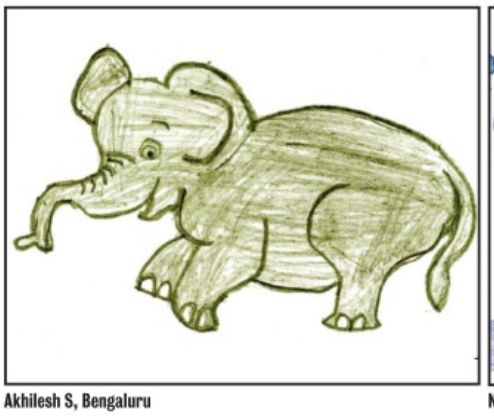
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Your tendency to overspend may impact your savings today. Be mindful of your words at work and home. Avoid lending money and postpone important decisions regarding real estate and other assets. Try not to escape responsibilities and maintain a balanced approach in all matters.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
With the support of your strong network, you may successfully implement business plans. Your wisdom will help you generate profits. Domestic life will be harmonious, and your relationship with your spouse will improve. Those involved in the metal industry or working as booking agents are likely to see positive results.

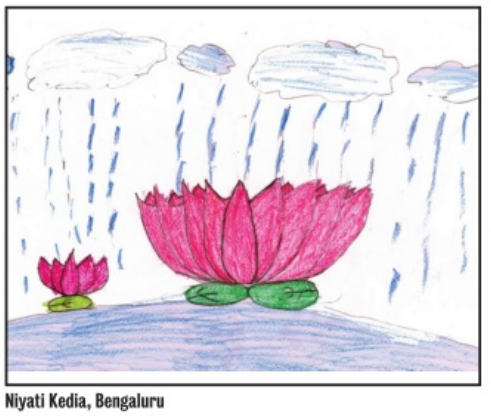
Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
From the morning, you may feel a sense of peace and patience, which will be reflected in your work. Your destiny may support the completion of postponed projects and targets. You will also show patience in maintaining harmony in your domestic life. However, you may experience minor skin or stomach-related issues.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
You may struggle with negative thoughts today, leading to feelings of dullness. Impatience and arrogance may prevent you from making difficult decisions. Seeking the blessings of elders can help you advance in your professional life. Avoid investing in unproductive assets. Lovebirds should refrain from discussing past negative experiences to maintain harmony.

KIDZONE



Akhilesh S, Bengaluru



Niyati Kedia, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
2 x 3 = 6
6 x 5 = 30
30 x 7 = 210
210 x 9 = 1890
1890 x 11 = 20790

BULL'S EYE
cheer, either, etch, ether, ethic, heir, here, HERETIC, hire, itch, retch, rich, their, there, three, thrice

FAST FIVE

S	T	I	L	L
K	R	A	A	L
S	O	N	D	E
A	M	A	I	N
M	A	L	T	S

STRIKE OUT

S	E	L	L	O	U	T		S	C	O	U	T		
U		O		V		A	L	O	H	A		W		
B	A	T	H	E	R	S		B	I	R	L	A		
D		H		N		S		R		N		N		
U	N	I	T	S		E	L	O	P	I	N	G		
E		A		O	L	I	D			Y				
D	I	N	G	H	Y		E	D	D	I	E	D		
	B		A	E	O	N		R		E				
B	O	N	A	N	Z	A		A	D	O	R	N		
O		X		F		G		N		O				
W	O	R	L	D		I	S	O	D	O	N	T		
E	S	E	P	S	R		U		E					
S	E	L	E	A	S	E		H	E	A	R	T	E	D

QUICK

C	E	N	S	O	R		K	I	N	G	L	Y		
K	A	P	I	L	D	E	V		V	I	I	I		
B		F		D		O		L		L				
M	A	Y		Y	O	U	N	G	E	R		A		
Y		R		L		N		E		M				
N	E	A	R	L	Y		L	I	E	D	E	R		
O		S		U		Y		N		O				
D		R	U	S	S	E	L	L		U	R	N		
U		E		T		A		D		N				
S		D		A		I		R						
P	R	A	N	C	E		N	O	M	A	D	S		

MENSA PUZZLE
F. Taking pairs of letters at opposite sides of the diagram, the sum of their numerical values equals 21 each time.

QUOTE UNCODE
To add value to others, one must first value others.

RIDDLER Fire

4	3	9	8	6	1	2	5	7
6	2	5	7	3	4	1	8	9
8	7	1	2	9	5	3	6	4
7	4	3	1	8	6	5	9	2
9	8	6	5	4	2	7	1	3
5	1	2	3	7	9	6	4	8
3	6	7	9	1	8	4	2	5
1	5	8	4	2	7	9	3	6
2	9	4	6	5	3	8	7	1

SUDOKU

ALPHA TRIANGLE
G, Ag, Rag, Rage, Grade, Danger, Angered.

GO FIGURE
Easy
4 – 2 – 1 + 7 = 8
Medium
2 + 8 + 1 + 5 = 16
Hard
3 x 2 x 8 + 5 = 53

LOOP

KAKURO

Volume No 18, Issue No 054 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/21142 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by R.J. Prakashan at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore – 560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru – 560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon – responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

Twinning in black

Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone made a rare appearance together as they were spotted at the airport. They made a stunning couple as they twinned in black. While Ranveer was seen in black pants, t-shirt and an over-coat with a beanie cap, Deepika was seen in a loose black t-shirt with track pants. They were both wearing sunglasses. As they posed for the paps, Ranveer could be seen requesting the paps to keep a distance from their car as daughter Dua was inside.

Ranveer and Deepika became parents to a baby girl in September 2024 and named them Dua Padukone Singh.

The couple made the paparazzi meet their little girl in private and requested them to refrain clicking her photos. The paps also agreed to completely respect their privacy. On the work front, Deepika was last seen in 'Singham Again'. While post the birth of her daughter, she has not begun any new movies yet, the actress was seen walking the ramp for Sabyasachi during his 25th anniversary celebration in Mumbai. Deepika was recently at the Paris Fashion Week and stunned everyone with her look in white.

Ranveer is currently shooting for Aditya Dhar's next, titled 'Dhurandhar'. Dhar had spoken about it and said in an interview, "We are currently filming it. We will try to release it by the end of this year. I am happy with the outcome; it's shaping up really well. Ranveer Singh has outdone himself in the film. Watch out." The film also stars Sanjay Dutt, R Madhavan, Akshaye Khanna. **–ETimes**

Harsh lesson

Vidya Balan says filmmaker's cruel comment taught her to be kind to people

Vidya Balan recently delivered the biggest hit of her career with Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3 where she stepped into the shoes of Manjulika once again after a gap of 17 years.

But the journey for the actress hasn't been exactly smooth, there was a time when she was considered bad luck and she was getting replaced from all her films. She opened up about an incident which taught her a very important life lesson. During her conversation with Galatta India she shared that she had shot for a Tamil film for a few days and she was suddenly replaced. She called up the filmmaker and said she wanted to meet him and she went with her parents to Chennai. Sitting in their office he showed them the footage and casually mentioned 'how can she look like a heroine? she doesn't know how to act, she doesn't know how to dance'.

Post this incident, Vidya stated that couldn't look at herself in the mirror for six months, she felt ugly. She also mentioned that one has the right and power to replace someone in a project but always be kind with your words as words have the power to damage or nurture you. She also stated that she will never forget that that was an early lesson in life that taught her to be kind to people because he really destroyed self image for six months.

At this point Vidya is in talks with multiple filmmakers for her next project but nothing has been finalised. The actress also shared in an exclusive interview with ETimes that post pandemic it has become difficult to make a women-led film but also added that it is cyclical and we will soon start making all kinds of films. **–ETimes**

THE COOK-OFF

Shahid Kapoor shared an dilemma he faces at home — the ongoing competition between his father, veteran actor Pankaj Kapur, and his wife, Mira Rajput, over who is the best cook.

During the promotion of his film Jersey with Kamiya Jani he admitted that it is a tough fight between the two, as both have their own strengths in the kitchen. According to Shahid, his father is an excellent cook but Mira has a edge over him. He also acknowledged that there are some dishes in which Pankaj Kapur surpasses Mira. Despite this friendly culinary rivalry, he expressed his appreciation for both, recognizing that they are equally talented and bring their own unique flavors to the table.

Apart from this, Shahid also revealed an interesting aspect of his eating habits. When asked about his favorite late-night snack or go-to 3 AM food, he admitted that he does not have one. He explained that he is very particular about his meals and avoids eating in the middle of the night. He makes sure to maintain a 12-hour gap between his meals and finishes his last meal by 8 pm. If work forces him to eat later, he confessed that crossing the 9 pm mark makes him quite grumpy. **–ETimes**

Tom Cruise, Ana de Armas fuel dating rumours

Hollywood actors Tom Cruise and Ana de Armas have once again fueled dating rumors after being spotted together in London earlier this week, reported People.

The actors, who have been seen together multiple times in recent months, were recently photographed arriving at the London Heliport, leading fans to speculate if their relationship is more than 'just friendship.'

Meanwhile, this isn't the first time the duo has been seen at the heliport together. According to People magazine, Cruise and Armas were also spotted there on Thursday night.

Earlier, on February 13, Cruise was spotted with Armas during a night out in London. In the pictures captured by paparazzi, the 'Blonde' actress was seen carrying two bags of takeout from a restaurant as the pair greeted fans stationed outside before getting into a taxi.

At the time, a source informed People magazine that the two were simply friends having dinner with their agents to discuss "potential collaborations down the line," and also mentioned that the pair "appeared to have no romantic connection, just friends." **–ANI**

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

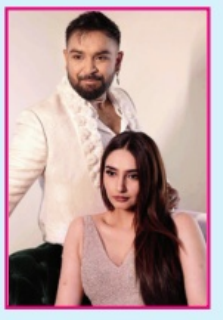
Head to the theatre!

Director, actor, lyricist Yogaraj Bhat is asking moviegoers to watch his latest movie Manada Kadalu in the theatres. The movie is scheduled for release on March 28.

"I assure the audiences that they will go home with a feeling of having watched a good movie that is worth their money and time. Manada Kadalu will entertain you and keep you hooked to your seats throughout. The climax of the movie is superb. It is quite different," said Bhat.

According to the director, the hunt for suitable actors was on for two months and finally someone introduced Sumukha to him. "Gangadhar and I were tired of our search. There are many actors in Sandalwood but our movie demands fresh faces for the lead. Sumukha, who played the lead, can go on to establish himself as an actor. I am very happy with his performance," the director said. The director has joined hands with producer E Krishnappa after a gap of 18 years. Krishnappa bankrolled Mungaru Male that was released in December 2006. "I am sure Manada Kadalu will break the record of Mungaru Male. It will become a major box-office hit. The movie Manada Kadalu has all ingredients – songs, music, sceneries, and romance – to cater to the needs of audiences, especially youths," the director said.

Ragini does it again



Ragini Dwivedi, known for her dancing skills, has once again proved her versatility in a music album – Nan Boo – which was released a few days ago. The music album has already become popular.

The music album was directed by T Abhishek aka Tubby. Nan Boo is Tubby's fourth music album. Prior to this, Tubby has directed music albums such as Ruthless, Vide Check, and Drop Out. "I handled the megaphone for Drop Out because I am an engineering college dropout. My love for music made me drop out of engineering college and pursue my passion," said Tubby. When asked why he chose Ragini Dwivedi, he said that he had a crush on her. "I know Ragini's dancing skills. She was very happy when they approached her to act in this music album. We completed the shooting of the music album in three days. It is a miniature love story. It was tough for me other than directing the video, I also scored the music, sang the song, and featured in the video with Ragini," he said.